

EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

Martin Middle School

111 Brown Street

East Providence, Rhode Island 02914

School Committee Special Meeting

August 21, 2007

Open Session

Mrs. Morris called the meeting to order at 7:00PM. All members were present: Robert Faria, Eileen Lovett, David Medeiros, Steven Santos, Mildred Morris. Also present: Dr. Jacqueline B. Forbes, Superintendent of Schools and Andrew Thomas, Esq.

A motion was made by Mr. Faria to move to Executive Session in accordance with RI General Laws, Section 42-46-5 (a) (1) Personnel, (a) (2) Litigation, seconded by Mr. Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

Public Session reconvened at 7:30PM. A motion was made by Mrs. Lovett to return to open session and to seal the minutes of the Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

Mrs. Lovett led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and Moment of

Silence was observed.

Chair's Report - None

Report of Superintendent and Staff

Personnel Recommendation – Mr. Edward Daft presented the personnel items:

Appointments

Clair Brauch PE Teacher Elementary

Laurie Greenlaw Girls Tennis Coach – High School

Robert J. Rodericks Health Teacher, Riverside Middle School

Terri Anne Spisso Elementary Librarian

Diane Treichler Reading Teacher - High School

Motion: Lovett/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0. (Under discussion, Mr. Santos asked for verification that these were all open positions)

Retirement

Manuel Realejo Day Forman – Maintenance

Effective 12/3/07

Motion: Lovett/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

Resignations

Paul Covellone Self-Contained Teacher, Special Ed– High School

Anibal Raposo JV Boy's Soccer Coach – High School

Cari Ravo Cross Country Coach – Riverside Middle School

Motion: Medeiros/Second: Lovett. Vote 5-0.

Personal Leave of Absence

**Judith LaCross (year 2) Elementary Reading Teacher – 2007/08
School Year**

**Greg McCarthy PE Teacher, Riverside Middle School – 2007-/08
School Year**

**Greg McCarthy Girls Basketball & Girls Track Coach, Riverside
Middle School, 2007-08 School Year**

**Laurie Tubman Math Teacher, Martin Middle School
2007-08 School Year**

Motion: Lovett/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

Parental Leave

**Jennifer McGovern Grade 4 Teacher, Waddington – 2007-08 School
Year**

Motion: Lovett/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

Recalls

Nancy Anthony Teacher – Grade 1 – MJ Francis School

**Kelly Costa Education Specialist – Kent Heights School
(One Year Only)**

**Motion: Lovett/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0. (Under Discussion: Mr.
Faria asked for justification of the recalls).**

Awarding of Bids

Dr. Hilton presented the Bids:

Testing and Preventative Maintenance of Fire Alarm Systems - awarded to low bidder, National, in the amount of \$7,821.0. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Medeiros, seconded by Mr. Faria. (Under discussion, Mr. Faria commented about the large discrepancies in the bid amounts and asked for justification).

Paperless Recruitment System – awarded to School Spring in the amount of \$8,850.00. (Waived the \$1,000 set-up fee). A motion to approve was made by Mr. Faria, seconded by Mr. Medeiros. (Under discussion: Mr. Medeiros asked for clarification of figures and time period covered). Dr. Hilton advised that the price is good for two years. Mr. Faria asked about references from other school systems. Dr. Forbes advised that she would like to implement this system as part of cost saving efforts and encouraged the School Committee to approve. The system will be up and running in a very short time. Vote 5-0 for School Spring.

2007-2008 Budget Work Session

Dr. Forbes reported that the proposed budget being presented tonight to the School Committee is a collective needs budget that

represents the requests of teachers, department heads, principals, program supervisors, directors and central office administrators. It is a zero-based budget, built on needs, contract obligations, regulations and requirements by law. The process began in February and after requests were compiled, they were presented in a public forum to the School Committee Finance Sub-Committee in a series of public meetings in May and June. Dr. Forbes thanked the Finance Sub-committee along with Dr. Hilton and Mr. Capron for their work on the budget. Also, a joint City Council and School Committee meeting was held to discuss the projected deficit for 2007-08 and potential cost savings of consolidation efforts with the City. The School Department is presently working with Johnson & Wales University's Institute of Public Policy to determine possible cost savings without reducing the quality of services. The time frame of the study is July 2007 through December 2007 with finalization of drafts sometime in January, 2008.

Dr. Forbes related that in accordance with RI General Law, the Superintendent must present a proposed budget to the School Committee for their consideration, which will be reviewed and discussed at two meetings (August 21st and August 28th). Once the budget is adopted, it will be forwarded to the City Manager for his review.

Dr. Forbes offered that this year, the budget process for all districts in RI has been uncommonly complex due to the recent legislative tax

reform efforts at the General Assembly. These reform efforts were addressed in a PowerPoint presentation by Dr. Forbes, later in the meeting.

Mrs. Morris asked for a vote on first passage of the budget; a motion was made by Mrs. Lovett, seconded by Mr. Medeiros. Discussion:

Mr. Faria commended staff for efforts on getting information to the sub-committee. Mr. Faria asked what will be done at the state level; every community is going through the same thing all over the state. He is very proud of the school department's children and families; the budget is horrible, but there have been many accomplishments in the system; particularly the High School senior projects, etc. This all costs money and we have contractual issues; there is much more to do. Our schools are dilapidated in the area of technology at the elementary schools and this does not address all the issues we have, such as robotics, technology, etc. This budget is not far out with the work being done in the district and the goal of high performing schools. Mr. Medeiros agrees 100% and thanked everyone for their work on the budget over long hours. Mr. Santos has seen good things here in the school system, felt we are pointed in the right direction and he does not have a problem with putting the dollars in the school system. He is troubled with \$4 million in salaries and benefits; money which is not being put into schools for technology etc. and statewide the problem is getting deeper with budgets with these numbers asking taxpayers to give every year. He will work to

the point of a reasonable document to present to the citizens and the City Council, but he does not see that now.

Mrs. Morris said lots of work went into the budget but there is not enough going to educational items (money spent on maintenance, such as boilers, etc.) lucky to have high performing schools, but we are not being given the tools to move students forward . She mentioned talent development and thinks it is a shame the budget is not for educational items. Mrs. Morris appreciates the efforts of administrative staff for their work on the budget.

Mrs. Lovett thanked School Committee members and administrators for their work on the budget; this is a big nut to crack and it is not just the City Council and School Committee's problem, but every person in East Providence. The School Committee has left no stone unturned; they have been working to make things better and to work for all involved. This is a Challenge for all and everyone is encouraged to look at the budget. Roll call vote: Mr. Faria, aye; Mrs. Lovett, aye; Mr. Medeiros, aye; Mr. Santos, nay; Mrs. Morris, aye. Vote 4-1 to approve.

Mr. Faria asked about a legal opinion to look at the charter to reduce School Committee's salary to put those funds in a line item for members to attend national conventions to provide networking with other School Committees in other states, etc. Mrs. Morris commented that about five years ago, this allocation was taken out of

the budget because it was needed for other things. Mr. Faria would like to contribute from his salary.

Dr. Forbes supports and encourages this; North Carolina has shifted all funding to the lottery and many other states have effective educational formulas without placing the burden on taxpayers. This problem is bigger than any one of us; the federal government is in debt and we need creative solutions, because we can't continue this way.

Mr. Medeiros asked for the budget to be available on the website. Dr. Forbes hopes to have it on line tomorrow. The School Committee would like the proposed budget on the website and later replaced with the adopted one. Mr. Faria asked for a link for questions to be emailed to the Superintendent.

A motion was made by Mr. Medeiros to adjourn at 9:10PM, seconded by Mrs. Lovett. Vote 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Iannelli, Administrative Assistant

Eileen Lovett, Clerk of the Committee